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Item 9 of the provisional agenda
Selection of topics for seminars to be held during the 2015 CES plenary session

Selection of topics for the seminars to be held during the 2015 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In March 2014, the UNECE Secretariat carried out an electronic consultation with the members of the Conference of European Statisticians on the possible topics for the seminars to be held during the 2015 plenary session of the Conference. The list of topics sent for consultation is provided as Annex I. The list has been regularly updated, based on the proposals from countries and recommendations by the Bureau. The list of seminars held since 2009 is provided as Annex II.

A total of 45 countries and international organisations replied to the consultation. They were invited to select topics for seminars and indicate whether their office would be willing to organise a seminar/session and/or prepare a paper on a specific topic.

The present note provides a summary of the replies received. Based on the outcome, the Bureau will make a proposal to the Conference for a decision on the 2015 seminar topics. The Conference will decide about the topics on 11 April 2014 under agenda item 9.

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I. Introduction

1. This year 45 countries or international organisations sent their proposals for topics to be discussed at the seminars of the 2015 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The following countries and international organizations (IOs) replied to the survey: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT), Eurostat, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

2. The results of the consultation on the possible topics for 2015 CES seminars are presented in section II of this paper. The countries and organizations which offered to organize a seminar/session or to present a paper are listed under each topic.

II. Results of the survey: preferences

Topic (E) Modernisation of statistical production and services + topic (H) Managing for efficiency in statistical offices

3. The combined topic received the highest number of preferences: **27 votes** (25 from countries and 2 from IOs). As an individual topic (e) modernisation received 18 votes, and (h) managing for efficiency received 15 votes. Due to their interlinkages and close connections to the work of the High-level Group for the modernisation of statistical production and services, the Secretariat suggests combining the two topics in line with the below comment by the United States.

4. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers:

- Modernisation: Netherlands, Russian Federation, Sweden, United States (possibly).
- Efficiencies: Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation and Sweden.

Session organizers:

- Modernisation: Croatia, Hungary and the United States could possibly be willing to support the seminar organisation.
- Efficiencies: Croatia (possibly), Finland and Sweden (possibly).

5. **Comments made:**

The United States suggests merging the topic of modernisation with some of the issues listed under other topics: for example human resource issues related to managing organizational change, managing for efficiency or strategic partnerships. Furthermore, the work of the High-level Group for the modernisation of statistical production and services needs further sharing with the many countries that have not been directly involved.

Topic (F) Strategic partnerships on the way towards data revolution

6. This topic received 16 votes (15 from countries and 1 from an IO).

7. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Germany.

Session organizers: Croatia could be interested in supporting the seminar organisation.

8. **Comments made:**

Italy commented that this topic offers to statistical offices a great opportunity to deal with the issue of data revolution and possible impact on official statistics. The issue has been raised in various international contexts, for example at the last United Nations Statistical Commission in New York. Furthermore, the topic opens the door to the exchange and further steps towards partnership among countries to understand how to jointly move at European and international level taking into account current activities already carried on by CES such as the High-level Group for the modernisation of statistical production and services (HLG).

Topic (A) The response by official statistics to the Sustainable Development Goals

9. This topic received **14 votes** (13 from countries and 1 from an IO).

10. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Sweden and Switzerland.

11. **Comments made:**

United States: The work for measuring sustainable development goals will continue to challenge all of us; statistical offices and international organisations need to share ideas about their abilities and concerns.

Topic (G) The next generation of statisticians and how do we prepare them?

12. This topic received **12 votes** (11 from countries and 1 from an IO).

13. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Canada.

Session organizer: The Russian Federation (co-organizer) and Croatia (possibly)

14. **Comments made:**

The Russian Federation: A seminar on this topic would provide a platform to discuss human resources issues, which could contribute to enhancing the in-depth expertise of national and international statistical offices as well as to improving training of experts in official statistics.

Topic (I) Measuring what matters – broadening official statistics towards difficult to measure topics

15. This topic received **11 votes** from countries.

16. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Denmark, Mexico and Turkey.

Session organizer: Finland. In addition Hungary expressed interest in being involved in supporting the seminar organisation.

Topic (J) Measuring governance

17. This topic received **7 votes** (6 from countries and 1 from IO).

18. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Mexico, Russian Federation and Sweden (possibly).

Topic (B) Climate change related statistics

19. This topic received **6 votes** from countries.

20. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Canada and Norway.

Session organizer: Norway (co-organise one seminar on topics B+D).

Topic (D) Energy statistics related to environment

21. This topic received **6 votes** from countries.

22. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Canada and Norway.

Session organizer: Norway (as a co-organizer of one seminar on topics B+D).

23. **Comments made:**

Norway: Suggest merging topics (b) "Climate change related statistics" and (d) "Energy statistics related to environment" into one seminar.

Topic (C) Gender statistics in light of Beijing+20

24. This topic received **3 votes** (2 from a country and 1 from an IO).

25. Contributions offered on this topic:

Papers: Netherlands, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and United States (possibly).

Session organizer: The United States could possibly be willing to support the seminar organisation.

26. **Comments made:**

OECD: Gender statistics is a topic of special interest thanks to the collective efforts of international organisations and countries that have led to interesting developments in the past few years. The statistical community should take advantage of the momentum to push this agenda item forward and consolidate the results achieved into current work in a sustainable way.

United States: The statistical community should pay particular attention to gender statistics since a lot of effort will go into meeting the demands of Beijing +20.

III. Conclusions

27. The CES Bureau will discuss the results of the survey and will present a proposal to the Conference on the 2015 seminar topics. The Conference will decide about the topics on 11 April 2014 under agenda item 9.

Annex I

The following list of possible topics for the seminar at the 2015 CES plenary session was circulated to countries and international organizations for consultation:

(a) The response by official statistics to the Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) Climate change related statistics;

(c) Gender statistics in light of Beijing+20;

(d) Energy statistics related to environment;

(e) Modernising statistical production and services;

(f) Strategic partnerships on the way towards data revolution;

(g) The next generation of statisticians and how do we prepare them?

(h) Managing for efficiency in statistical offices;

(i) Measuring what matters – broadening official statistics towards difficult to measure topics;

(j) Measuring governance.

Annex II

Seminars of the Conference of European Statisticians held since 2009

2009 1. Balancing principles of professional autonomy and accountability with the mandate to produce policy relevant data

2. Strategic issues in business statistics

2010 1. Spatial statistics

2. Impact of global crises on statistical systems

2011 1. Organization of data collection and sharing, and the management challenges for the implementation of SDMX

2. Measuring human capital

2012 1. Implementing the fundamental principles of official statistics, including issues related to coordination of national statistical systems

2. Challenges for future population and housing censuses (based on lessons learned from the last round)

2013 1. Challenges in implementing the system of environmental-economic accounting (SEEA) and measuring sustainable development in follow up to Rio+ 20

2. Challenges in providing access to micro-data for research purposes

2014 1. What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?

2. Migration statistics